

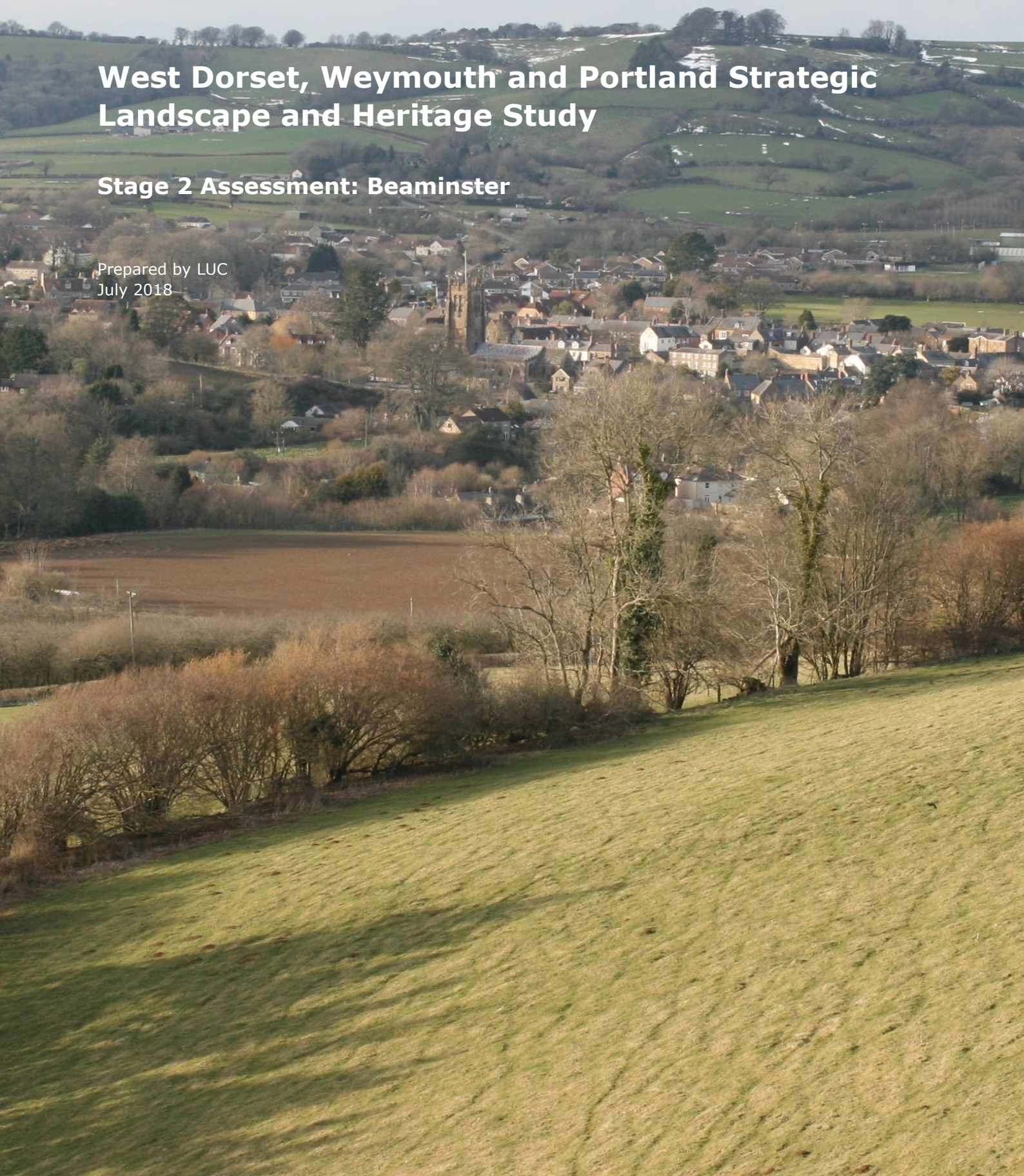


[www.landuse.co.uk](http://www.landuse.co.uk)

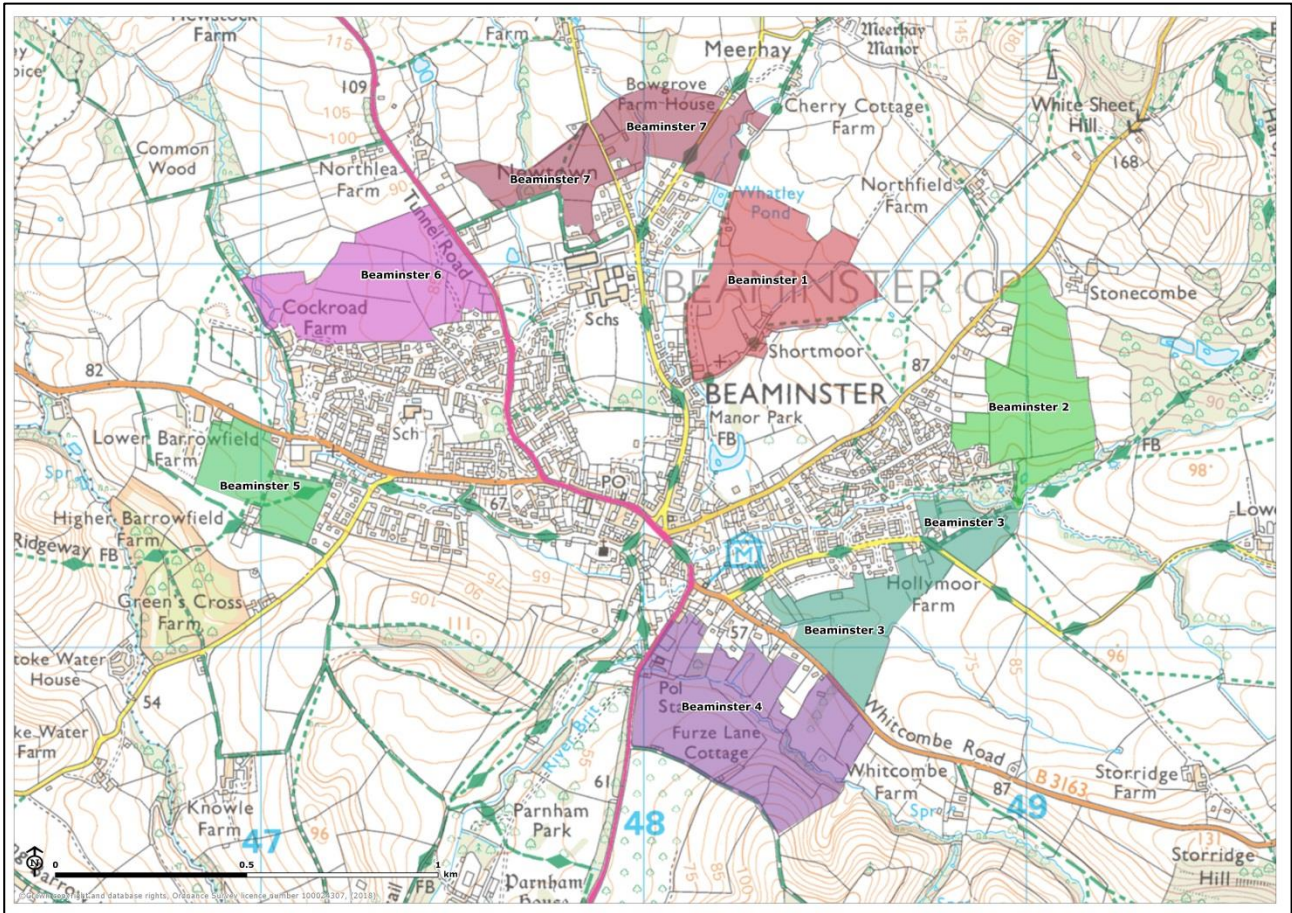
# West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Strategic Landscape and Heritage Study

## Stage 2 Assessment: Beaminster

Prepared by LUC  
July 2018



# Beaminster



## Representative photographs of the settlement



## Location and description

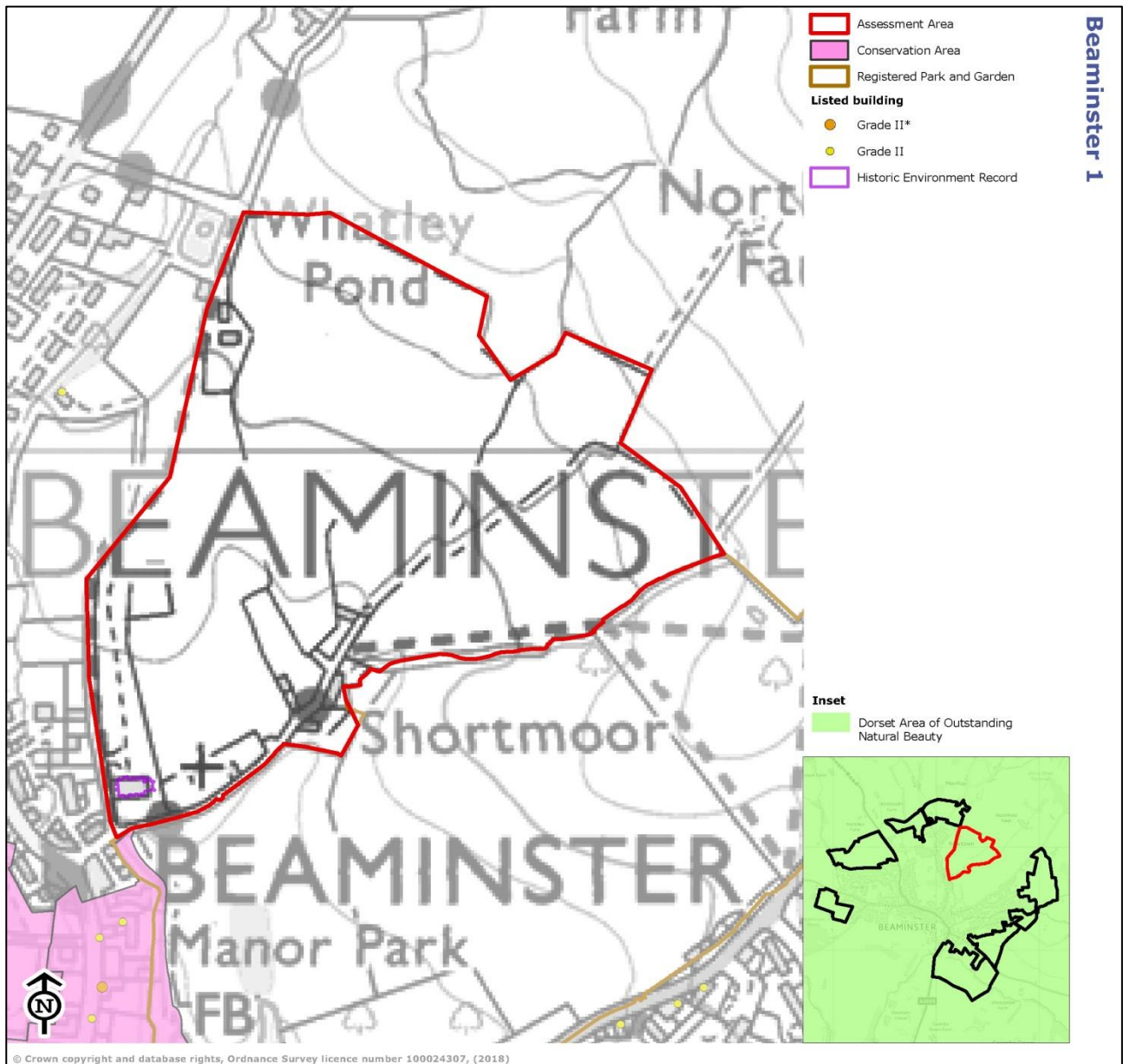
Beaminster is located in a bowl-shaped valley at the source of the River Brit, around 10 kilometres north of Bridport. The town became prosperous in the medieval period, when it was known for textile production including linen and wool. The town continued to thrive until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the lack of a railway line adversely affected industry. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, residential development in the town has expanded along roads up the sides of the surrounding hills, particularly to the west and east.

The town is surrounded by an intricate and complex landscape of ridges and hills, including the Powerstock Hills to the south and Beaminster Down to the northeast, which are all within the Dorset AONB.

## Aerial context



## Assessment area: Beaminster 1



## Representative photographs



## Landscape sensitivity assessment

| Landscape character context  |   |          |            |                   |
|--|---|----------|------------|-------------------|
| <p>This assessment area falls within the Brit Valley Landscape Character Area. It is wholly contained within the Dorset AONB. This area comprises mixed farmland to the north east of Beaminster, adjacent to the Registered Park and Garden of Beaminster Manor.</p>  |   |          |            |                   |
| Assessment criterion   | Description   |          |            | Sensitivity score |
| Physical character (including topography and scale)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gently sloping to the north towards White Sheet Hill with small streams running towards the River Brit.</li> <li>The field pattern is irregular and varied in-scale, although the low hedgerows and sense of openness increase the scale of the landscape.</li> </ul>  |          |            | <b>M</b>          |
| Natural character  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The primary land cover within this area is mixed arable and pasture farmland.</li> <li>Fields are divided by thick hedgerows with mature trees which contribute to natural character. Small streams and in-field trees are also important natural features.</li> </ul>   |          |            | <b>L-M</b>        |
| Historic landscape character ( <i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i> )  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area is immediately adjacent to the Grade II Registered Park and Garden of Beaminster Manor and provides part of the wider landscape setting to this heritage asset.</li> <li>This area is directly adjacent to and provides an undeveloped setting to Beaminster Conservation Area (and numerous Listed Buildings contained within).</li> <li>The HLC indicates that the enclosures within this area are piecemeal medieval fields.</li> </ul> |          |            | <b>M-H</b>        |
| Form, density and setting of existing development  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area is generally unsettled with structures limited to several scattered dwellings and a church.</li> <li>This area provides part of the landscape setting to the historic core of the settlement</li> </ul>  |          |            | <b>M-H</b>        |
| Views and visual character including skylines  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are views to nearby hills which overlook the wider landscape and Beaminster. This includes the prominent landform of White Sheet Hill to the north east.</li> <li>There are views across existing settlement, particularly from higher ground.</li> <li>The area is characterised by undeveloped skylines which are occasionally marked by mature trees.</li> </ul>  |          |            | <b>M-H</b>        |
| Perceptual and experiential qualities  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area retains a strong rural character with high levels of tranquillity despite the close proximity of urban development.</li> <li>In places, large field sizes and low hedgerows create a sense of openness and exposure.</li> </ul>  |          |            | <b>M</b>          |
| Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity  |   |          |            |                   |
| <b>L</b>   | <b>L-M</b>  | <b>M</b> | <b>M-H</b> | <b>H</b>          |
| <p>The locally prominent sloping landform, setting the landscape provides to valued heritage assets, remnant medieval field pattern, long views to the surrounding uplands and undeveloped character with high levels of tranquillity result in an overall <b>moderate-high</b> landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced slightly by the limited natural features in the landscape.</p> |   |          |            |                   |

## Heritage sensitivity assessment

| Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context   |     |   |     |   |
|--|-----|---|-----|---|
| The assessment area comprises a series of post-medieval piecemeal enclosures, and the hamlet of Shortmoor.   |     |   |     |   |
| Description and significance of heritage assets present  |     |   |     |   |
| <i>A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.</i>   |     |   |     |   |
| Designated assets within the assessment area:  |     |   |     |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>   |     |   |     |   |
| Non-designated assets within the assessment area:  |     |   |     |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trefoil House (former Holy Trinity Church)</li> <li>Park Cottage and the four buildings in the Shortmoor hamlet</li> </ul>  |     |   |     |   |
| Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development  |     |   |     |   |
| Unlikely that development would result in physical loss of assets.   |     |   |     |   |
| Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development   |     |   |     |   |
| Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:   |     |   |     |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beaminster Manor Park, Grade II Registered Park and Garden<br/><b>High importance</b></li> </ul>  |     |   |     |   |
| Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:   |     |   |     |   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trefoil House</li> <li>Park Cottage and Shortmoor hamlet</li> </ul>   |     |   |     |   |
| Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area   |     |   |     |   |
| L  | L-M | M | M-H | H |
| <p>Beaminster Manor Park is susceptible to setting change through the loss of wider rural setting. Development likely be quite visible from across much of the northern section of park, changing the immediate setting of the parkland, potentially erasing the relationship with the hamlet of Shortmoor and, depending on building heights and disposition, interfering with longer views to the downs to the north.</p> <p>The legibility of Shortmoor, as a historic hamlet, could also potentially be lost – along with setting change to non-designated historic buildings (of no more than local importance).</p> <p>Views of Beaminster Conservation Area and Beaminster Manor Park from the unnamed C-class minor road that forms the southern edge of the Manor Park Registered Park and Garden (e.g. from the entrance to Northfield Farm) could be significantly changed.</p> |     |   |     |   |

# Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

## Summary of key sensitivities

**The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:**

- The locally prominent sloping landform, which frames the historic core of Beaminster (Conservation Area).
- The unsettled character of the area, which provides part of the landscape setting to the existing town of Beaminster.
- The setting that the landscape provides to the adjacent Grade II Registered Park and Garden of Beaminster Manor.
- Long views across the town and adjacent landscapes, including to the surrounding hills which overlook the town.
- High levels of tranquillity and strong rural character despite the close proximity of the town.
- The location of this area within the nationally valued landscape of the Dorset AONB.

## Guidance for sustainable development

This area is within the Dorset AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

**Any new development should:**

- Be limited to small-scale, low density development, associated with the existing settlement. It should also complement the existing form and vernacular of existing buildings.
- Respect the setting of nearby heritage assets including the Grade II Registered Park and Garden of Beaminster Manor and Beaminster Conservation Area (including component Listed Buildings).
- Respect and seek to conserve surrounding rural character and high levels of tranquillity in the siting and design of any new development. Retain the rural and unsettled character of the landscape which provides an undeveloped setting to the town.
- Respect the distinct visual character of the landscape, including views to and from White Sheet Hill.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

## Assessment area: Beaminster 2



## Representative photographs





## Landscape sensitivity assessment

| Landscape character context  |   |          |            |                   |
|--|---|----------|------------|-------------------|
| This assessment area falls within the Brit Valley Landscape Character Area. It is wholly contained within the Dorset AONB. It comprises an area of undeveloped farmland to the east of Beaminster.   |   |          |            |                   |
| Assessment criterion   | Description   |          |            | Sensitivity score |
| Physical character (including topography and scale)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very steeply sloping land to the north tributary valley leading to the River Brit.</li> <li>Fields are relatively large in size and are enclosed by low hedgerows which create a sense of expansiveness and reinforce the perception of a large-scale landscape.</li> </ul>  |          |            | <b>M-H</b>        |
| Natural character  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The primary land cover within this area is mixed farmland, with some small paddocks.</li> <li>Low cut hedgerows with occasional trees divide the fields and create a habitat network within the area. Tracts of broadleaved woodland are located along the stream in the south of the area, adjacent to the Scite/Great Westwood Coppices SNCI.</li> </ul> |          |            | <b>L-M</b>        |
| Historic landscape character ( <i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i> )  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area is immediately adjacent to the Grade II Registered Park and Garden of Beaminster Manor and provides part of the wider landscape setting to this heritage asset.</li> <li>The HLC indicates that the fields within this area are primarily piecemeal enclosures of post-medieval origin.</li> </ul>   |          |            | <b>M</b>          |
| Form, density and setting of existing development  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area has an undeveloped character and is adjacent to the existing urban edge, forming part of the landscape setting to Beaminster.</li> </ul>   |          |            | <b>M-H</b>        |
| Views and visual character including skylines  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are along views across the landscape, particularly from the higher ground. There are also views to the surrounding hills which overlook Beaminster and the wider area.</li> <li>Skylines are generally open and undeveloped, with mature trees along the stream and within field boundaries forming occasional features.</li> </ul>                  |          |            | <b>M-H</b>        |
| Perceptual and experiential qualities  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The landscape has a sense of openness and exposure due to the low cut hedgerows and long views across the stream valley to the south.</li> <li>The landscape retains a strong rural character despite the close proximity of adjacent urban development.</li> </ul>  |          |            | <b>M-H</b>        |
| Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity  |   |          |            |                   |
| <b>L</b>   | <b>L-M</b>  | <b>M</b> | <b>M-H</b> | <b>H</b>          |
| The prominent sloping landform, important broadleaved woodland habitat, setting provided to heritage assets, sense of openness and exposure and long views across the surrounding landscape result in an overall <b>moderate-high</b> landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced slightly by the lack of historic field patterns and limited natural features in the landscape. |   |          |            |                   |

## Heritage sensitivity assessment

### Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The assessment area comprises enclosed strip fields, albeit with some boundary loss and a small area of riparian woodland.

### Description and significance of heritage assets present

*A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.*

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

### Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

None.

### Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Beaminster Manor Park, Grade II Registered Park and Garden  
**High importance**

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- None

### Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

L

L-M

M

M-H

H

Development would result in a small degree of setting change to the eastern extremity of Manor Park RPG. Topography suggests that this would not be highly visible, and will not affect the core of the designed landscape.

# Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

## Summary of key sensitivities

**The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:**

- The visually prominent and steeply sloping valley landform with broad, undeveloped skylines.
- Important semi-natural features, particularly the stream and broadleaved woodland along the southern boundary of the area.
- The setting the landscape provides to important heritage features including the Grade II Registered Park and Garden of Beaminster Manor.
- The unsettled character of the landscape which provides an undeveloped rural backdrop to the existing settlement.
- The sense of openness and exposure with long views across the wider landscape to the hills which surround the town.
- The location of this area within the nationally valued landscape of the Dorset AONB.

## Guidance for sustainable development

This area is within the Dorset AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

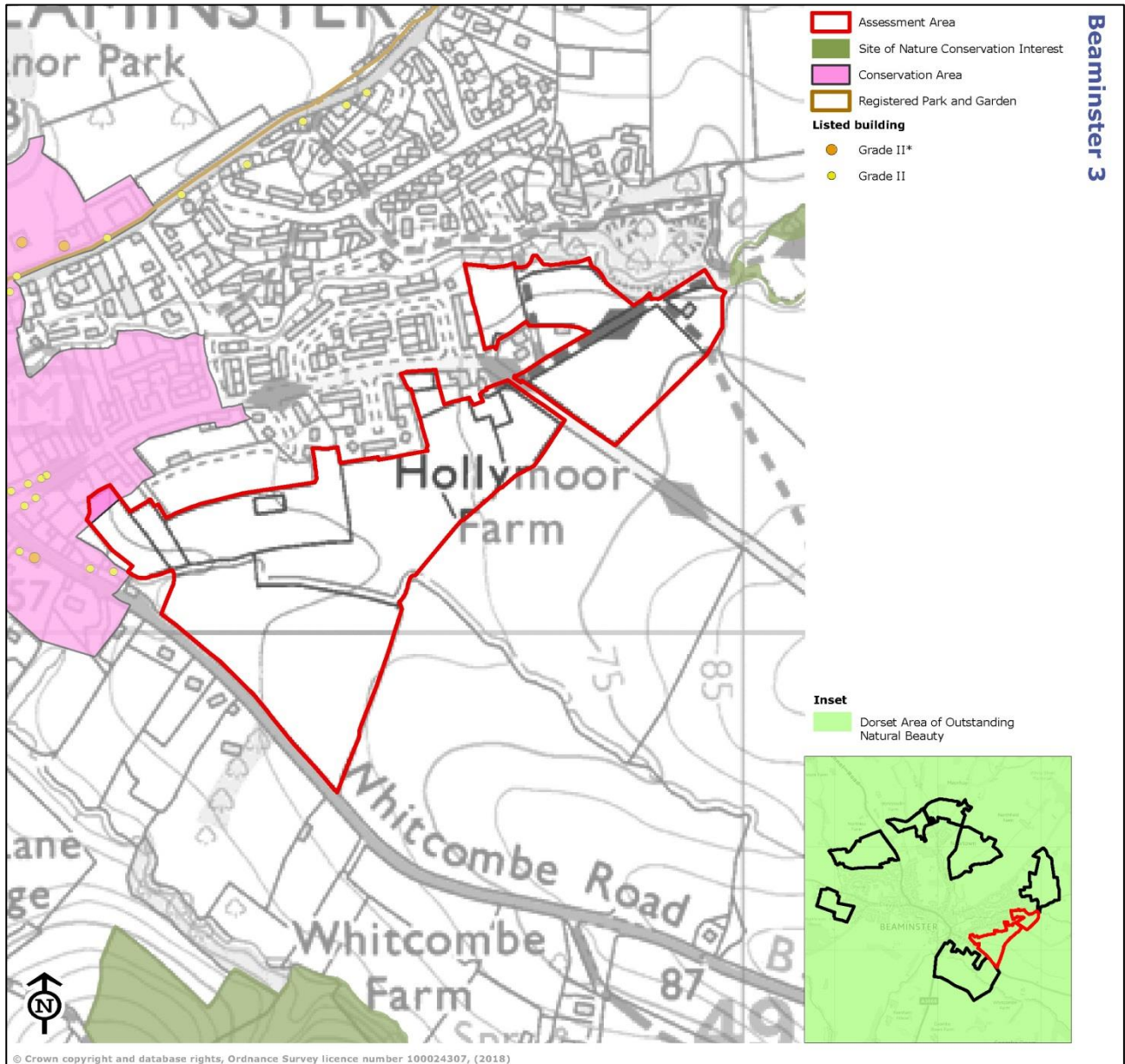
**Any new development should:**

- Be limited to areas associated with the existing urban development to the west of the area. The style and vernacular of development should be in-keeping with existing structures.
- Avoid areas where development would be highly prominent in views from the higher ground to the east and south east.
- Protect the semi-natural habitats and features within and adjacent to the area, including the stream and broadleaved woodland within Scite/Great Westwood Coppices to the south (locally designated as an SSSI).
- Respect the setting of nearby heritage assets including the Grade II Registered Park and Garden of Beaminster Manor.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

## Assessment area: Beaminster 3



Beaminster 3

## Representative photographs



## Landscape sensitivity assessment

| Landscape character context   |  |   |     |                   |
|---|--|---|-----|-------------------|
| This assessment area falls within the Brit Valley Landscape Character Area. It is wholly contained within the Dorset AONB. It comprises a number of agricultural fields to the south east of Beaminster.  |  |   |     |                   |
| Assessment criterion  | Description  |   |     | Sensitivity score |
| Physical character (including topography and scale)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gently sloping land associated with a tributary stream which gradually rises towards Storridge Hill to the south east.</li> <li>The piecemeal fields are generally small in size, however the low cut hedgerows with long views create a more expansive landscape.</li> <li>Other areas are more enclosed and smaller in scale.</li> </ul>  |   |     | M                 |
| Natural character   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The primary land cover within this area comprises grassland and arable fields divided by low close-cropped hedgerows, with few mature trees.</li> <li>A small stream also contributes to the natural character of the landscape.</li> </ul>   |   |     | L-M               |
| Historic landscape character ( <i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i> )   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area is directly adjacent to and provides part of the wider landscape setting to Beaminster Conservation Area (and the Listed Buildings it contains).</li> <li>The HLC indicates that the fields within this area are a mixture of medieval and post-medieval enclosures.</li> </ul>   |   |     | M                 |
| Form, density and setting of existing development   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This landscape is unsettled and forms part of the landscape setting to the southern parts of the town, including the historic core and more recent housing development.</li> </ul>  |   |     | M-H               |
| Views and visual character including skylines   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The low cut hedgerows and limited woodland results in long views across the landscape to the hills which overlook Beaminster and the wider area.</li> <li>This area is not widely visible from the existing settlement.</li> <li>Skylines are open and expansive, although are not very prominent within the wider landscape. Occasional mature trees form skyline features.</li> </ul> |   |     | M                 |
| Perceptual and experiential qualities   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area has an open and expansive character and is strongly rural despite the close proximity of the town.</li> <li>Views of nearby modern development in the east of the town can detract from the rural qualities of the landscape.</li> </ul>  |   |     | M                 |
| Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity   |  |   |     |                   |
| L   | L-M  | M | M-H | H                 |
| The setting the landscape provides to Beaminster Conservation Area, unsettled character, sense of openness and exposure and long views to the surrounding area increase landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced by the limited natural features in the landscape and prominent views to modern development. On balance, this area has overall moderate landscape sensitivity. |  |   |     |                   |

## Heritage sensitivity assessment

### Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The assessment area is composed of piecemeal enclosures and a small area of paddocks adjacent to the settlement edge of Beaminster.

### Description and significance of heritage assets present

*A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.*

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- Very small area of Beaminster Conservation Area  
**High importance**

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

### Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

None

### Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Beaminster Conservation Area  
**High importance**
- Edgeley Cottage, Grade II Listed Building  
**High importance**
- Wynford and front wall, Grade II Listed Building  
**High importance**

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Important Local Building to Whitcombe Road  
**Low importance**

### Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

**L**

**L-M**

**M**

**M-H**

**H**

The Conservation Area is partly buffered from the assessment area by an area of allotments, but development has the potential to give rise to setting change. There are opportunities to mitigate this through retention of existing landscape structure and setting any development well back from the Conservation Area boundary.

# Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

## Summary of key sensitivities

**The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:**

- The setting the landscape provides to the historic core of Beaminster, including the Conservation Area.
- Remnant medieval field patterns, which give the landscape a sense of time-depth.
- The unsettled character of the landscape, which forms part of the landscape setting to the south of the town.
- The long views across the landscape enabled by the low cut hedgerows and limited tree cover.
- The open, expansive character of the landscape, with broad, undeveloped skylines.
- The location of this area within the nationally valued landscape of the Dorset AONB.

## Guidance for sustainable development

This area is within the Dorset AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

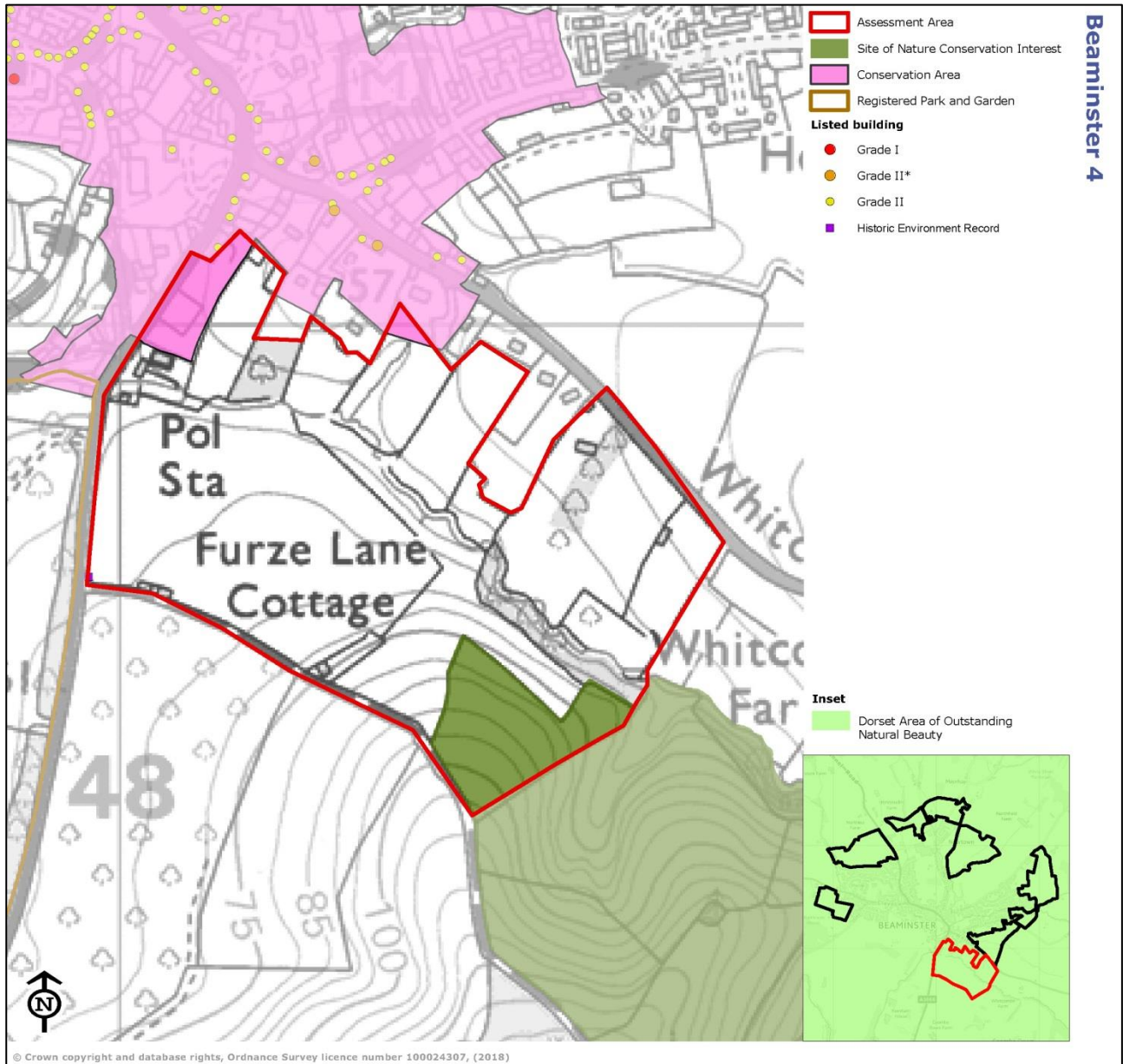
**Any new development should:**

- Be associated with the existing urban edge of Beaminster to the north. New development should also complement and be in-keeping with existing structures.
- Preserve the sense of time-depth in the landscape, including medieval field patterns and the setting provided to the historic core of Beaminster (Conservation Area).
- Not adversely affect the visual character of the landscape, including the open, expansive views to the south.
- Preserve the natural features of the landscape, including the hedgerows with occasional trees which divide the fields.
- Ensure the long views and expansive character of the landscape is retained.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage<sup>3</sup>.

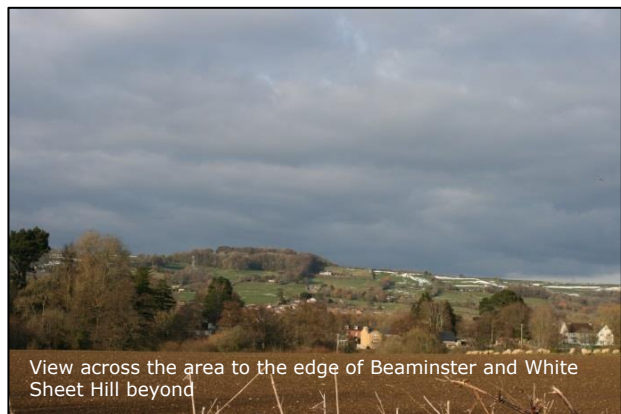
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<sup>3</sup> Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

## Assessment area: Beaminster 4



## Representative photographs





## Landscape sensitivity assessment

| Landscape character context   |  |   |     |                   |
|---|--|---|-----|-------------------|
| This assessment area falls within the Brit Valley and Powerstock Hills Landscape Character Areas. It is wholly contained within the Dorset AONB. It comprises fields to the south of Beaminster, either side of a tributary stream of the River Brit.   |  |   |     |                   |
| Assessment criterion  | Description  |   |     | Sensitivity score |
| Physical character (including topography and scale)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The landform of this area varies from flat land adjacent to the tributary stream which becomes steeper in the south east of the area as it rises up towards Coombe Down Hill.</li> <li>Fields are generally small-scale strip fields. In the west of the area fields are larger and the landscape is more expansive.</li> </ul>   |   |     | M-H               |
| Natural character   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fields are used for a mixture of arable growing and sheep grazing and are divided by low cut hedgerows.</li> <li>Lowland dry acid grassland habitat is located on the slopes of Coombe Down Hill, and is locally designated as part of Whitcombe Farm SSSI.</li> <li>Broadleaved woodland along the stream and mature trees within hedgerows also contribute to the natural character of the landscape.</li> </ul>  |   |     | M                 |
| Historic landscape character ( <i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i> )   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area is immediately adjacent to the Grade II* Registered Park and Garden of Parnham House and provides part of the wider landscape setting to this heritage asset.</li> <li>This area is directly adjacent to and provides an undeveloped setting to Beaminster Conservation Area (and numerous Listed Buildings contained within).</li> <li>The HLC indicates that the fields within this area are a mix of medieval and post medieval enclosures.</li> </ul> |   |     | M-H               |
| Form, density and setting of existing development   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area is mostly unsettled. Development is limited to several dwellings along the A3066 and isolated cottages.</li> <li>This area forms an undeveloped setting to the historic core of Beaminster, in addition to the wider town.</li> </ul>   |   |     | M-H               |
| Views and visual character including skylines   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where vegetation allows, there are views over the settlement to the higher hills beyond.</li> <li>Skylines are undeveloped and are marked by the frequent mature trees within the landscape.</li> </ul>   |   |     | M-H               |
| Perceptual and experiential qualities   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongly rural and natural character despite the close proximity of the town, with the landscape providing an escape from the urban environment. There is a sense of enclosure as a result of the dense vegetation.</li> <li>Traffic from the adjacent A3066 can introduce noise and movement into the landscape and adversely affect tranquillity.</li> </ul>  |   |     | M-H               |
| Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity   |  |   |     |                   |
| L   | L-M  | M | M-H | H                 |
| The prominent sloping landform of Coombe Down Hill, important semi-natural habitats within Whitcombe Farm SSSI, setting provided to valued heritage assets, unsettled character, long views from higher ground and strong rural and naturalistic character result in an overall <b>moderate-high</b> landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced due to the impact of traffic from the adjacent A3066. The sloping land of Coombe Down Hill would be highly sensitive to development. |  |   |     |                   |

## Heritage sensitivity assessment

### Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The assessment area is composed of enclosed paddocks, planned enclosure and an area of enclosed open ground.

### Description and significance of heritage assets present

*A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.*

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- Small parts of the Beaminster Conservation Area  
**High importance**

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

### Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

Areas within the Conservation Area should be avoided to prevent significant change to the character and appearance of the asset.

### Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Beaminster Conservation Area  
**High importance**
- Woodlands, Grade II Listed Building  
**High importance**

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- None

### Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

**L**

**L-M**

**M**

**M-H**

**H**

Development of the assessment area would result in loss of paddocks that, although not functionally connected to more recent properties east of Hitts House, represent a relatively intact area of historic landscape.

Similarly, development within the Conservation Area boundary would necessarily result in some harm to the asset by way of significant change to character and appearance. Development immediately adjacent to the boundary is likely to give rise to setting change. Development on the rising ground in the south of the area would potentially be visible from, and change the setting of, the Conservation Area.

# Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

## Summary of key sensitivities

**The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:**

- The steeply sloping landform of Coombe Down Hill in the south east of this area.
- The valued semi-natural habitats including the lowland dry acid grassland habitat at Whitcombe Farm SSSI.
- The remnant medieval field patterns, which give the landscape a sense of time-depth.
- The setting provided to important heritage assets including the Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden of Parnham House and Beaminster Conservation Area.
- The undeveloped character of the landscape, which provides a picturesque backdrop to the existing settlement.
- The long views across Beaminster from higher ground to the surrounding hills which overlook the settlement.
- The strong rural qualities with high levels of tranquillity which provide an escape from the nearby town.
- The location of this area within the nationally valued landscape of the Dorset AONB.

## Guidance for sustainable development

This area is within the Dorset AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

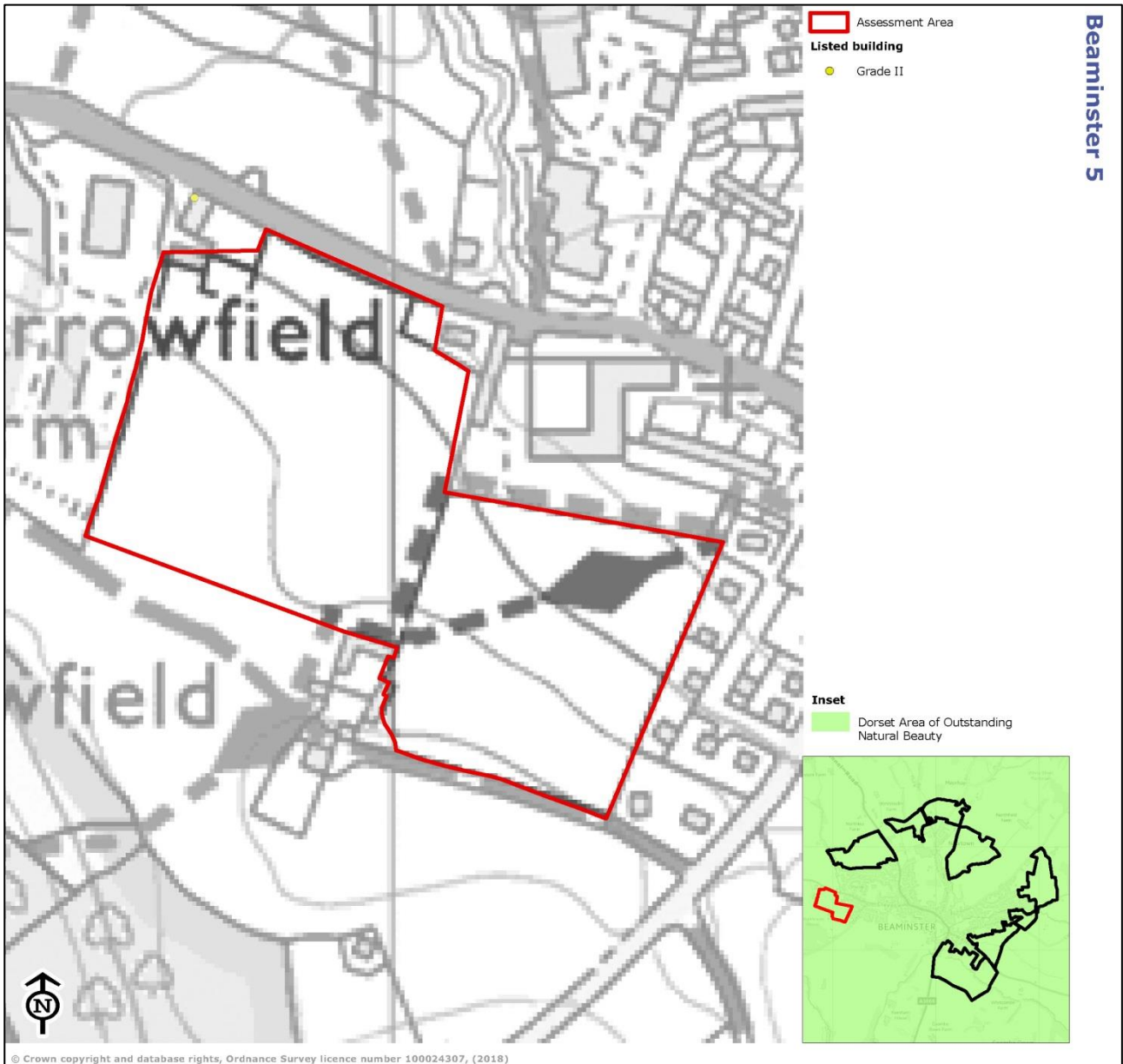
**Any new development should:**

- Avoid the steep slopes (particularly in the south east), where development would be particularly prominent.
- Preserve the important semi-natural features within the area, including locally designated habitats within Whitcombe Farm SSSI.
- Retain the structure of the landscape, including the remnant medieval field patterns.
- Respect the setting of nearby heritage assets including the Grade II\* Registered Park and Garden of Parnham House and Beaminster Conservation Area.
- Respect the setting that the landscape provides to existing development within Beaminster.
- Preserve the distinct visual character of the landscape, including the views experienced from higher ground across Beaminster to White Sheet Hill.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

## Assessment area: Beaminster 5



## Representative photographs



## Landscape sensitivity assessment

| Landscape character context  |  |   |     |                   |
|--|--|---|-----|-------------------|
| This assessment area falls within the Brit Valley Landscape Character Area. It is wholly contained within the Dorset AONB. It comprises a small area of agricultural land to the west of Beaminster.   |  |   |     |                   |
| Assessment criterion   | Description  |   |     | Sensitivity score |
| Physical character (including topography and scale)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gently sloping land at the base of Gerrard's Hill (located to the south west).</li> <li>Fields are medium in size, although the low hedges and views to nearby high ground increases the scale of the landscape.</li> </ul>   |   |     | L-M               |
| Natural character  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The primary land cover within the area is grassland pasture.</li> <li>The fields are divided by hedgerows that have been supplemented with fencing in places. Occasional trees are found within the field boundaries.</li> </ul>  |   |     | L-M               |
| Historic landscape character ( <i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i> )  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HLC indicates that the enclosures within this area originated during the industrial period.</li> <li>The Grade II Listed Building of Barrowfield Farmhouse and Barn is directly adjacent to the north.</li> </ul>   |   |     | L-M               |
| Form, density and setting of existing development  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although this area has an unsettled character, it is strongly associated with the modern urban edge adjacent to the east.</li> </ul>  |   |     | M                 |
| Views and visual character including skylines  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area is overlooked from higher ground within the wider landscape, including Gerrard's Hill, although it is not particularly prominent.</li> <li>From the higher ground, there are long views over existing development.</li> <li>Skylines are undeveloped and open.</li> </ul> |   |     | M                 |
| Perceptual and experiential qualities  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Although undeveloped, this area is strongly associated with the adjacent urban area and large industrial buildings.</li> <li>There is a sense of exposure on higher ground.</li> </ul>  |   |     | L-M               |
| Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity  |  |   |     |                   |
| L  | L-M  | M | M-H | H                 |
| The setting that the landscape provides to the Grade II Listed Barrowfield Farmhouse, sloping landform, unsettled character, undeveloped and open skylines and the fact the area is overlooked from high ground including Gerrard's Hill all increase landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced by the lack of historic field patterns, limited natural features in the landscape and strong association with the adjacent urban environment. Overall, this landscape has <b>moderate</b> landscape sensitivity. |  |   |     |                   |

## Heritage sensitivity assessment

### Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The assessment area is composed of planned enclosures.

### Description and significance of heritage assets present

*A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.*

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

### Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

None.

### Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Waddon Hill Roman Fort
- **High Importance** Barrowfield Farmhouse, Grade II Listed Building  
**High importance**

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Barrowfield quarry  
**Negligible importance**

### Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

L

L-M

M

M-H

H

Waddon Hill Fort is located to the west of the development area on a narrow east-west ridge reaching a height of 210m. Whilst a strategic defensive location, it was also intended to dominate the surrounding rural landscape and its inhabitants. Development within the assessment area would encroach on the site's setting and reduce the legibility of its functional/ historical relationship, but not to a significant extent.

Development would result in loss of Barrowfield farmhouse's rural setting and of functionally connected land, resulting in harm to its significance.

# Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

## Summary of key sensitivities

**The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:**

- The hedgerows dividing the fields which contribute to the habitat network within the wider landscape.
- The unsettled character of the landscape, resulting in open and undeveloped skylines.
- The setting the area provides to the adjacent Grade II listed building of Barrowfield Farmhouse.
- The visibility of the area from nearby high ground which overlooks the landscape, including in views from Gerrard's Hill.
- The location of this area within the nationally valued landscape of the Dorset AONB.

## Guidance for sustainable development

This area is within the Dorset AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

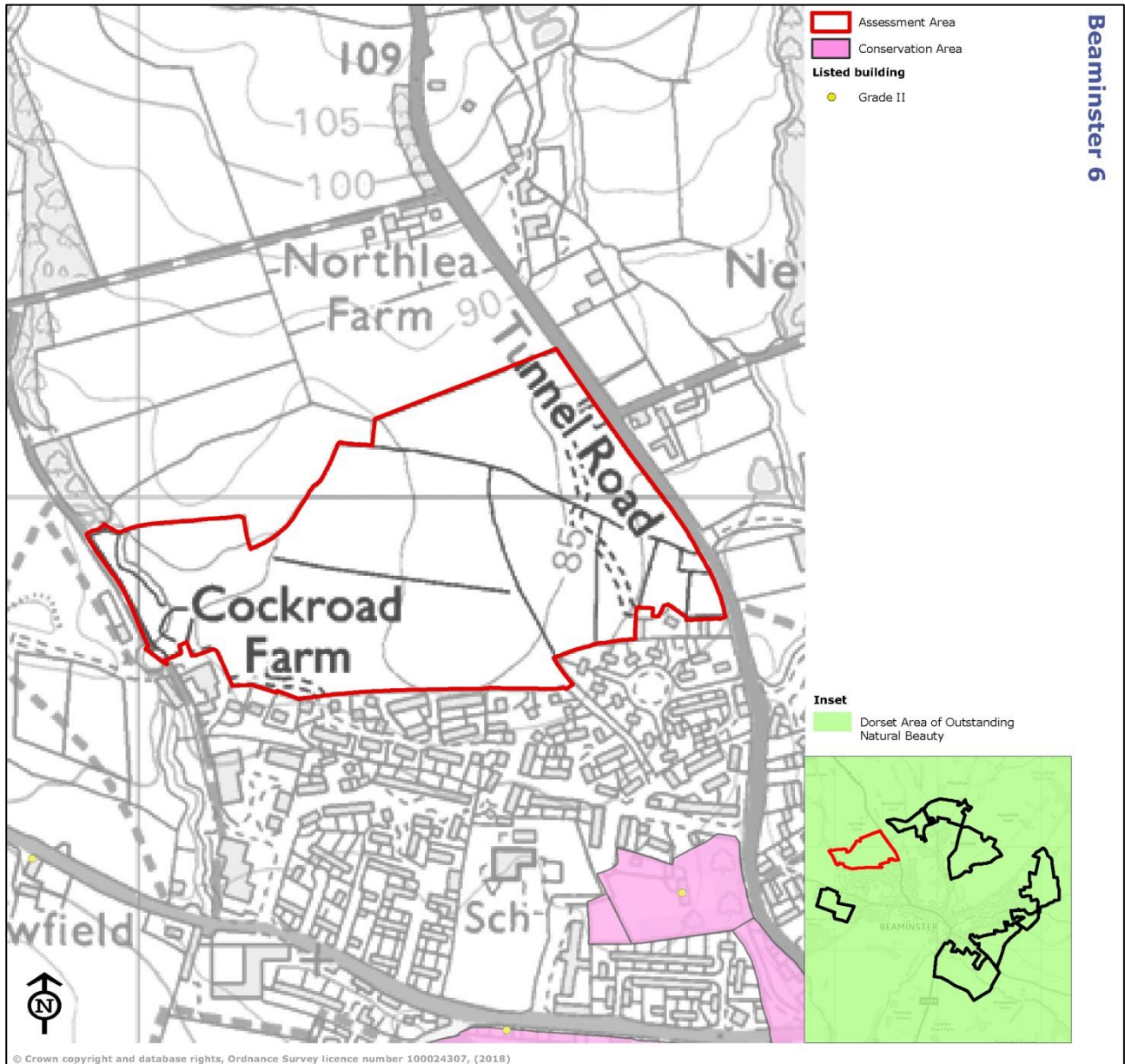
**Any new development should:**

- Be limited to the lower elevations of the area, adjacent to the existing urban edge.
- Be in keeping with the form, density and vernacular of existing adjacent development.
- Retain the hedgerows dividing the fields which give the landscape structure and form part of the wider habitat network.
- Respect the setting that the landscape provides to valued heritage features including the Grade II Listed Building of Barrowfield Farmhouse.
- Not detract from the open and undeveloped skylines and the setting that the area provides to existing development in Beaminster.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage<sup>5</sup>.

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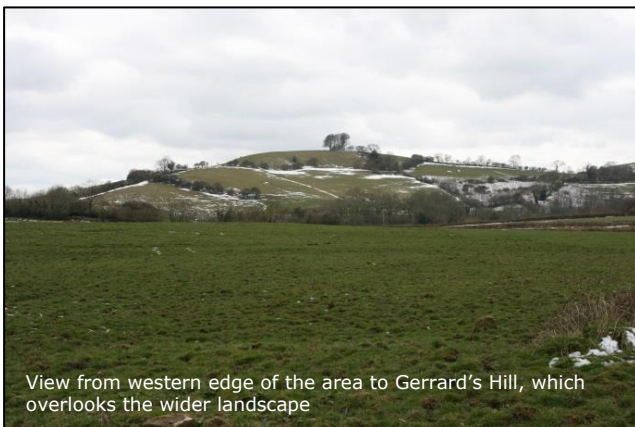
<sup>5</sup> Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

## Assessment area: Beaminster 6



Beaminster 6

## Representative photographs





## Landscape sensitivity assessment

| Landscape character context   |  |   |     |                   |
|---|--|---|-----|-------------------|
| <p>This assessment area falls within the Brit Valley Landscape Character Area. It is wholly contained within the Dorset AONB. It comprises several grassland fields adjacent to the north-west of existing development within Beaminster.</p>   |  |   |     |                   |
| Assessment criterion  | Description  |   |     | Sensitivity score |
| Physical character (including topography and scale)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gently undulating land at the base of Horn Hill (located to the north-west).</li> <li>Fields are generally medium sized, although low hedgerows and expansive skies can increase the scale of the landscape in places.</li> </ul>   |   |     | L-M               |
| Natural character   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fields are primarily used for grazing cattle and sheep and are divided by thick hedgerows with frequent mature trees which contribute to natural character.</li> <li>Broadleaved woodland is located along a small tributary stream which crosses north-south along the western edge of the area.</li> </ul>  |   |     | L-M               |
| Historic landscape character ( <i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i> )   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HLC indicates that the fields within this area are of modern, 20<sup>th</sup> century origin.</li> <li>The area does not provide an immediate setting to any designated or listed heritage assets.</li> </ul>   |   |     | L                 |
| Form, density and setting of existing development   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area has an unsettled character with structures limited to farm buildings.</li> <li>It is strongly associated with the existing urban edge to the south and provides a setting to the town.</li> </ul>   |   |     | M                 |
| Views and visual character including skylines   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Views to and overlooked by surrounding high ground, including the prominent mound of Gerrard's Hill.</li> <li>Views are dependent on vegetation cover; trees enclose views in some places, while elsewhere low hedgerows enable views to adjacent landscapes.</li> <li>There is little visual relationship with the existing settlement.</li> <li>Skylines are undeveloped and are punctuated by trees within the hedgerows.</li> </ul> |   |     | M                 |
| Perceptual and experiential qualities   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This area retains a rural character despite the proximity of adjacent urban development.</li> <li>The adjacent main road of the A3066 can introduce traffic noise and movement into the landscape.</li> </ul>   |   |     | M                 |
| Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity   |  |   |     |                   |
| L   | L-M  | M | M-H | H                 |
| <p>The undeveloped and rural character of the area and views to the landscape from higher ground increase landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced by the limited semi-natural habitats in the landscape, lack of historic field patterns, visual enclosure and adverse impact of traffic noise from the adjacent road. This area has overall <b>moderate</b> landscape sensitivity.</p> |  |   |     |                   |

## Heritage sensitivity assessment

### Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The assessment area is entirely composed of amorphous enclosures, of probable modern date.

### Description and significance of heritage assets present

*A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.*

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

### Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

None

### Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Waddon Hill Roman Fort **High Importance**

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Quarry  
**Negligible importance**

### Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

**L**

**L-M**

**M**

**M-H**

**H**

Waddon Hill Fort is located to the southwest of the development area on a narrow east-west ridge reaching a height of 210m. Whilst a strategic defensive location, it was also intended to dominate the surrounding rural landscape and its inhabitants. Development within the assessment area would encroach on the site's setting and reduce the legibility of its functional/ historical relationship, but not to a significant extent.

# Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

## Summary of key sensitivities

**The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:**

- Hedgerows with mature trees and streams which create part of an important habitat network within the wider landscape.
- The unsettled and rural character of the landscape which feels far removed from existing settlement despite its close proximity.
- Long views across the landscape to higher ground (where vegetation allows), including to Gerrard's Hill and Horn Hill.
- The location of this area within the nationally valued landscape of the Dorset AONB.

## Guidance for sustainable development

This area is within the Dorset AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

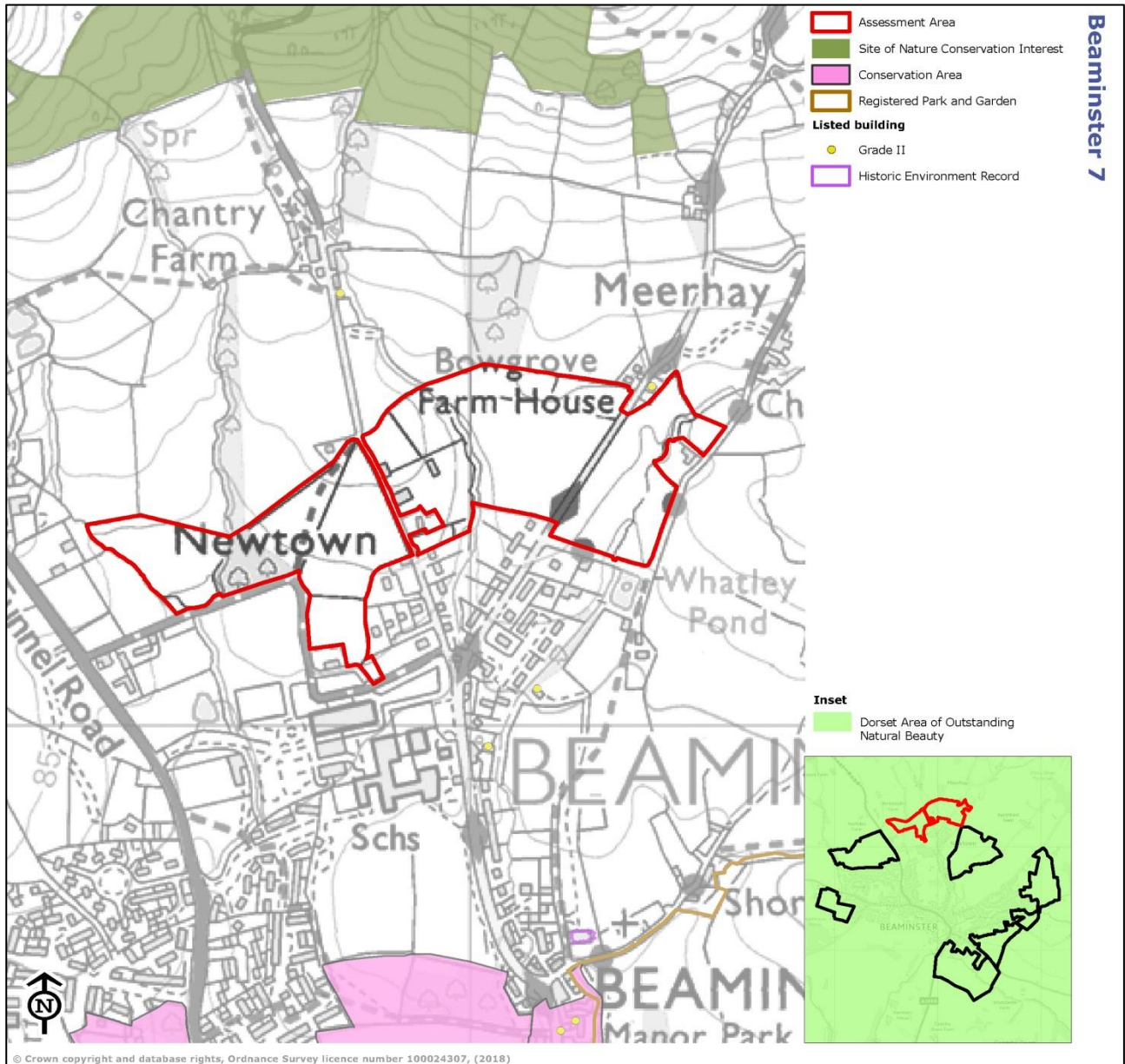
**Any new development should:**

- Be associated with and in-keeping with existing development in Beaminster to the south.
- Retain the important natural features within the landscape including hedgerows with mature trees and streams, which also give the landscape structure.
- Respect and seek to conserve surrounding rural character and high levels of tranquillity in the siting and design of any new development
- Not be prominent in views from nearby high ground including Gerrard's Hill and Horn Hill
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

## Assessment area: Beaminster 7



## Representative photographs



## Landscape sensitivity assessment

| Landscape character context  |   |   |     |                   |
|--|---|---|-----|-------------------|
| This assessment area falls within the Brit Valley Landscape Character Area. It is wholly contained within the Dorset AONB. It comprises agricultural fields directly to the north of Beaminster  |   |   |     |                   |
| Assessment criterion   | Description   |   |     | Sensitivity score |
| Physical character (including topography and scale)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undulating land carved by small stream valleys which gently slopes in a northerly direction towards Buckham Down and Minstern's Hill.</li> <li>Fields are generally small-scale, piecemeal enclosures, although there is a sense of openness where hedgerows are low, creating a larger scale landscape.</li> </ul>            |   |     | M                 |
| Natural character  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The primary land use within this area is grazing pasture, with some horse paddocks.</li> <li>Fields are divided by hedgerows with trees (supplemented with post and wire fencing), while the small streams are lined by deciduous woodland.</li> <li>Recently planted woodland is located in the south of the area.</li> </ul> |   |     | L-M               |
| Historic landscape character ( <i>please see separate heritage assessment for asset-based information</i> )  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HLC indicates that the majority of the enclosures within this area are medieval in origin.</li> <li>This landscape also provides part of the wider setting to several Grade II Listed farm houses.</li> </ul>  |   |     | M                 |
| Form, density and setting of existing development  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sparsely settled with isolated houses, although it has an association with existing built edge to the south east and provides part of the wider landscape setting to the town.</li> </ul>  |   |     | M-H               |
| Views and visual character including skylines  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are long views across the adjacent landscapes (particularly from higher ground), to the surrounding hills which overlook this landscape.</li> <li>The undeveloped skylines are visible above the existing town and are occasionally marked by trees.</li> </ul>  |   |     | M-H               |
| Perceptual and experiential qualities  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally rural character despite the close proximity to development, although areas of horseculture can give the landscape a suburban feel.</li> <li>The A3066 crosses to the west of the area and can introduce noise and movement from traffic.</li> </ul>  |   |     | M                 |
| Overall assessment of landscape sensitivity  |   |   |     |                   |
| L  | L-M   | M | M-H | H                 |
| The historic medieval field patterns, setting that the landscape provides to important heritage assets, unsettled character, long views across the town and rural character result in an overall <b>moderate</b> landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity is reduced by the limited semi-natural habitats within the assessment area and the suburban influences in the landscape. |   |   |     |                   |

## Heritage sensitivity assessment

### Dorset Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) context

The assessment area is composed of post-medieval piecemeal enclosures, regular enclosures and a small area of riparian grazing land.

### Description and significance of heritage assets present

*A definitive list of assets within each study area is provided at Appendix 1 in the Stage 2 methodology report. Only assets judged to be of a level of significance likely to influence the planning process are discussed below.*

Designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

Non-designated assets within the assessment area:

- None

### Likely susceptibility to physical change as a result of development

None

### Likely susceptibility to setting change as a result of development

Designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- Bowgrove farmhouse, Grade II Listed Building  
**High importance**

Non-designated assets with the potential to experience setting change:

- None

### Overall assessment of sensitivity of heritage assets to change within the area

L

L-M

M

M-H

H

Development would result in setting change to Bowgrove farmhouse by partially surrounding the asset with modern development, potentially cutting it off from functionally connected land and also reducing its ability to be understood as a farmhouse.

Nevertheless, this could potentially be mitigated through sensitive masterplanning and design.

# Summary of key sensitivities and guidance for sustainable development

## Summary of key sensitivities

**The following provides a summary of the key landscape and heritage sensitivities within the assessment area:**

- Semi-natural landscape features including hedgerows with mature trees, streams and areas of woodland.
- Historic medieval field patterns, which create a sense of time depth within the landscape.
- The wider landscape setting the area provides to important heritage features including Grade II Listed Farmhouses, including Bowgrove Farmhouse.
- Long views across the landscape and the town, including to the hills which surround and overlook the town.
- Undeveloped character and strong rural qualities of the landscape despite the close proximity of the urban development to the south.
- The location of this area within the nationally valued landscape of the Dorset AONB.

## Guidance for sustainable development

This area is within the Dorset AONB, a nationally designated landscape where there is a presumption against major development. Any development may have an impact on the character and special qualities of the AONB. Therefore, the guidance below should be closely followed.

**Any new development should:**

- Be associated with and in-keeping with the existing structures to the south of the area.
- Respect the setting the landscape provides to historic features within the landscape, including the Grade II Listed farmhouses.
- Retain the important semi-natural features within the landscape, including the hedgerows with mature trees, streams and areas of woodland.
- Not dilute the historic medieval field patterns which give the landscape structure and a sense of time-depth.
- Not be prominent in views from adjacent high ground.
- Ensure any new development does not adversely affect the special qualities of Dorset AONB, including uninterrupted panoramic views, a sense of tranquillity and remoteness, dark night skies, undeveloped rural character and a rich historic and built heritage<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Taken from the Statement of Significance within the Dorset AONB Management Plan 2014-2019

## Potential in-combination effects on heritage assets

Development of Beaminster 3 and 4 could potentially give rise to in-combination effects on the Beaminster Conservation Area, arising from setting change that erodes the rural context of the Conservation Area.

Development of Beaminster 5 and 6 would give rise to in-combination effects on the setting of Waddon Hill Roman Fort.